(b) and (c) Measures to effect cost reduction through productivity enhancement, modernisation energy conservation, automation and computer applications were discussed in the technical sessions.

It is the continuous endeavour of the Government to maximise cement production and ensure its availability to the consumers at reasonable price. Government is closely monitoring the availability of coal, wagons and other infrastructural support to the cement industry and remedial action is taken wherever necessary.

Schemes for increasing the installed capacity of cement are being liberally approved. The State Governments have been advised to keep a close watch on the dealers so that they do not indulge in profiteering at retail level.

Employment generation during the Eighth Five Year Plan

857. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether special emphasis is being laid on employment generation under the 8th Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, what strategy and programmes are contemplated for achieving that objective; and

(c) what is the rate of employment generation contemplated under the plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) to (c) The Eighth Plan Approach Document envisages employment as the central thrust of the Plan. Employment opportunities are proposed to be expanded at an average rate of 3 per cent per annum during the decade 1990-2000. For this purpose, the Approach suggests that substantial shifts in the pattern investment in favour of sectors and activities using less capital and more labour per unit of output would be necessary. Details of the strategy and programmes for employment would be incorporated in the Eighth plan document

Protests by press representatives against hike in newsprint

858. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the president of the All India Small and Medium Newspapers Federation had tendered his resignation on January 24, 1991, from the Newsprint Price fixation Committee, in protest against the steep hike in newsprint prices;

(b) if so, whether the newsprint prices have been increased frequently in recent times, if so, the details of the increases affected since December 1989 till date and the reasons and justifications for such increases; and

(c) what is Government's reaction to the protests made by the press and its representatives from time to time against the hikes in newsprint prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The above mentioned Committee is for the price fixation of imported newsprint which is done on a quarterly basis. The details of the prices since 1989 are in the statement. The prices of imported newsprint are determined by international factors over which Government has no control.

(c) The Newsprint Price Fixation Advisory Committee includes representatives of Newspaper Industry also, who are free to express their views in the deliberations of the Committee meeting and their views are given due weightage.